IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method for producing an optical component from synthetic quartz glass, said method comprising:

feeding a coaxial arrangement comprising an outer jacket tube **having an inward bore therein**, an inner jacket tube **being in the inward bore of the outer jacket tube and having** ~~**provided with**~~ an internal bore**, said inner jacket tube having a constriction therein that narrows the internal bore of the inner jacket tube and that provides an abutment in the inner bore**, and a core rod **in said inner bore of the inner jacket tube, said core rod** having a lower face end resting on **the** ~~**an**~~ abutment within the internal bore in **a** vertical orientation to a heating zone**;**~~**,**~~

softening said coaxial arrangement therein zonewise**;** and

elongating said coaxial arrangement **so as** to obtain the optical component~~**, wherein the abutment is configured as a constriction of the internal bore of the inner jacket tube**~~.

2. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the constriction **has** ~~**is provided with**~~ an axially continuous opening.

3. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the core rod comprises a core region having an outer diameter surrounded by a cladding glass layer having an

outer diameter wherein a ratio of the outer diameter of the cladding glass layer to the outer diameter of the core region ranges from 2 to 4.

4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the core rod is formed from butt-jointed core rod pieces.

5. (previously presented) The method according to claim 4, wherein the core rod pieces are loosely stacked one upon the other.

6. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein a mechanical stop is provided which prevents an upward movement of the core rod in a direction opposite to a pulling direction.

7. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the core rod and the inner jack tube define therebetween an inner annular gap with a mean gap width in a range between 0.5 mm and 1.5 mm.

8. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the inner jack tube and the outer jacket tube define therebetween an outer annular gap with a mean gap width of not more than 2 mm.

9. (previously presented) The method according claim 1, wherein the inner jacket tube is movably held in a lateral direction.

10. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein a holding cylinder of quartz glass is fused onto an upper end of the outer jacket tube.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein the holding cylinder has a circumferential groove in which a gripper engages the holding cylinder.

12. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein a first holding ~~means~~ **device** engages an upper end of the outer jacket tube, and a second holding ~~means~~ **device** engages an upper end of the inner jacket tube, the first holding ~~means~~ **device** and the second holding ~~means~~ **device** being mechanically independent of each other.

13. (currently amended) The method according to any one of claim 1, wherein a first holding ~~means~~ **device** engages an upper end of the outer jacket tube, and that an upper end of the inner jacket tube is held on the outer jacket tube or on the first holding ~~means~~ **device**.

14. (previously presented) The method according to claim 13, wherein the upper end of the inner jacket tube or a mechanical extension of the inner jacket tube is provided with an outer collar which rests on the outer jacket tube or on a mechanical extension thereof.

15. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the inner jacket tube has a mean hydroxyl group content of less than 1 wt ppm.

16. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the inner jacket tube is produced by elongating a hollow cylinder which has been mechanically treated to a final dimension.

17. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the outer jacket tube comprises a hollow cylinder which has been mechanically treated to a final dimension.

18. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the outer jacket tube is provided with a downwardly tapering lower end.

19. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the core rod comprises a core region having an outer diameter surrounded by a cladding glass layer having an outer diameter, wherein a ratio of the outer diameter of the cladding glass layer to the outer diameter of the core region ranges from 2.5 to 3.5.

20. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the inner jacket tube and the outer jacket tube define therebetween an outer annular gap having a mean gap width of not more than 1 mm.